

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS****REGULAR MEETING****Monday, May 14, 2001**

Present: June Bailey, James Johnston, M.S. Mitchell, Trix Niernberger, Leon Robinson, Joe Todd, and William Sanders

Also Present: Joe Johnson and Ken Arnold – Shaefer, Johnson, Cox and Frey Associates PA; Chris Bohm – Savoy Ruggles & Bohm PA; Ray Trail – Director of Finance; Troy Hendricks – Program Development Coordinator (golf professional) Auburn Hills Golf Course; Don Harrison – Golf Course Manager; Tonia Fairbanks – Wichita/Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department; Lucy Burnett; Doug Kupper and Maryann Crockett (staff)

President Mitchell called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m. The minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 9, 2001, were reviewed and approved.

1. **Naming of Property at Bluff and Longview.** President Mitchell referred board members to Council Proceedings dated May 1, 2001, re: Appointments to Committee to Name the Park at Longview and Bluff. Mitchell stated that the Longview neighborhood residents have requested that the park be named the “Longview Neighborhood Park.”

On motion by Niernberger, second by Todd, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to concur with the neighborhood request and City Council action and name the park “Longview Neighborhood Park.”

2. **Director’s Update.** Director Kupper briefly reviewed the following items:

- **Auburn Hills Golf Course.** Director Kupper introduced Ray Trail, Director of Finance, who in turn introduced Don Harrison, Golf Course Manager, and Troy Hendricks, golf professional at Auburn Hills Golf Course. Director Trail commented that the course would officially open to the public on Friday, May 25. He added that there would also be an inaugural tournament on Thursday, May 24. He said the tournament is an invitational fundraiser to raise funds for youth golf and for the purchase of a statue that has been commissioned of a boy and girl to be placed in a prominent location in front of the clubhouse.

Director Trail commented that Auburn Hills would not be operated in the same manner as the other four City courses that have golf professionals who are individual proprietors contracted by the City to run a business out of a public facility. He explained that the City would operate Auburn Hills and that Troy Hendricks was a City employee. He said there has been considerable discussion with the City Council regarding the best method of operating municipal courses. He said the Council has decided to try both management

methods with review and analysis at a future date. He said staff was also exploring the possibility of changing the management structure at the other four courses, creating a director of golf position and trying to better coordinate efforts in terms of how the courses are operated and managed on a long-term basis.

Director Trail responded to several questions concerning golf course operations, maintenance, length of course, budget (he explained that the golf course budget was a separate self-sustaining “enterprise” fund), fees (he said tentatively, green fees at Auburn Hills will be \$20 during the week and \$25 on weekends). He also explained that an adjustment would be made for individuals who have purchased season passes. He concluded by inviting board members to a complimentary round of golf and tour of the facility.

Trix Niernberger inquired about increasing the Park and Recreation budget. There was brief discussion concerning future park budgets and infrastructure maintenance. Director Trail concluded by stating that City staff had confidence in Director Kupper’s ability to manage Park and Recreation programs and services.

- Fairmount Park. Director Kupper said a design/build “Request for Proposal” (RFP) has been forwarded to the City Manager for approval. Mitchell requested that board members be furnished a copy of the RFP.
- Grove Park. Director Kupper reported that Tony Scott, the City Archeologist was reviewing the Grove Park Master Plan and performing “test digs” at several locations throughout the park. He said the consultants were still moving forward with the park design. Tonia Fairbanks reported that City staff had contacted the State Historic Preservation Office to try to work out an agreement to bypass some duplicate review requirements. She estimated that the archeologist’s site report should be completed within three weeks. Responding to a question from Bailey, Fairbanks briefly explained the “dig” process.
- Sleepy Hollow Park. President Mitchell reported that he would be meeting with the Wesley development coordinator and others next Monday. He said he thought they would work out a schedule for neighborhood meetings at that time.
- Board Appointments. Director Kupper reminded board members that their appointments expire on June 30, 2001.
- Pawnee Prairie Storm Water Easement. Director Kupper explained that a residential development adjacent to Pawnee Prairie Park was requesting permission to install a drainage line through the park to an existing storm water holding pond. Chris Bohm from Savoy Ruggles & Bohm PA referred board members to an aerial map of Shelley’s Orchard Addition. He explained that as part of the platting process they were required to develop a drainage plan for approval by City Engineering. He said the original drainage plan called for installation of a storm sewer adjacent to a hedgerow that existed within the park and then angled down into a detention pond. He said an easement was never requested nor received at that time and that the hedgerow has grown considerably in size. He mentioned that Pawnee Prairie has been designated as a wildlife habitat area and that

installation of the line adjacent to the hedgerow would require removal of numerous mature cedar trees. He commented that he has walked the area with park staff and President Mitchell to attempt to locate some alternatives to minimize the impact of the storm water pipe across park property.

Bohm continued by saying that just east and adjacent to the 20 foot force main easement there was a partially clear spot along the equestrian trail that would require removal of about 22 mature trees. He said another alternative was to follow the trail part way and angle into the pond. He said that option would require the removal of about 7 trees; however, the ground slopped off to the east and pipe coverage might be a problem in the future. Director Kupper asked about the size and depth of the pipe. Bohm reported that the pipe was 54" wide and would probably be buried 2 to 3 feet in the ground. He added that they were also talking to the developer about re-grading the lots on the east side of the development so they can reduce the pipe size. Bohm concluded by asking board members for their direction, ideas and comments.

Bailey asked Mitchell his opinion. President Mitchell commented that he was not in favor of building a second pond either at the end of a cul-de-sac in the development or elsewhere. He said a route that damages the fewest trees seemed to be the best solution and that using the equestrian trail would do that. He said he felt the current detention pond was sufficient to handle the additional drainage/runoff.

Director Kupper stated that when reviewing the alternatives he wanted board members to understand that the Park and Recreation Department had no obligation to grant any easement for storm water discharge onto park property. President Mitchell said he disagreed because the dominant land drained onto park property, so he felt there was a "right of drainage" from the land that was west of the hedgerow. He commented that the "law of drainage" says that the person who owns the higher land has the right to drain to the lower land.

Niernberger asked if the developer would compensate the Park Department for the loss of the trees. Bohm said that had not been discussed; however, that was negotiable. There was also brief discussion of the utility easements along the hedgerow. Director Kupper said park staff did not want to encroach into the hedgerow because that was the buffer between the park and residential homes. He asked if there was a way to tie into an existing storm sewer in the existing subdivision. Bohm said that would overtax the system.

President Mitchell suggested that staff work with the developer to come up with the best solution. Niernberger suggested the possibility of some type of monetary compensation for the easement. There was considerable discussion between Director Kupper and President Mitchell regarding the amount of drainage generated by 40 acres of houses and streets. Director Kupper explained that City staff wanted to look at the capacity of the pond from an engineering, environmental and naturalist's standpoint. Bohm said he could provide information on the design and build aspects of the development and the drainage plan.

- Study of School Sites – Possible Joint Uses or Property Transfers. Director Kupper provided board members a copy of “Study of School Sites – Possible Joint uses or Property Transfers” for discussion purposes. He commented that the proposal was being reviewed by the City Manager for discussion with the City Council. He said the report reflected citywide needs.

June Bailey referred board members to page 2, paragraph 2, re: North Linwood Park and mentioned that she did not think that was what the Board had agreed on. Director Kupper indicated that during the park tour on April 14, President Mitchell, June Bailey and Trix Niernberger had discussed amending paragraph 2. He said the proposed amendments were not reflected in the draft, but were as follows: that the Park Board agree to accept the Linwood Elementary school site as trade for the 4.8 acres of North Linwood Park, provided that the school system would demolish the entire school, with the exception of the multi-purpose room, provided that the room had it's own heating and cooling power plant. He said board members further suggested moving the playground equipment from Henry Park to the Linwood Elementary School site and that Henry Park could either be sold or used for in-fill housing. The board further agreed that neighborhood meetings should be held with the neighbors surrounding North Linwood Park to obtain their comments and input. June Bailey reiterated that Wildwood Park should continue to be considered in the exchange package also.

President Mitchell clarified that staff cleared the deed restrictions. Director Kupper stated that as long as the park remains at least 40 acres in size, it was within the deed restrictions. Trix Niernberger inquired if a meeting had been held with the neighbors of North Linwood Park. Ken Arnold reported that the site council met with the neighborhood surrounding Linwood Elementary school, but he did not know if that included neighbors of North Linwood Park.

On motion by Sanders, second by Bailey, IT WAS VOTED to recommend that the City trade 4.8 acres of Linwood Park North to the School Board for the 2-acre Linwood Elementary School site with the provisos listed above. Motion passed 6-0. Niernberger abstained.

In addition, board members reviewed the following properties included in the list.

#### Properties Requested for Consideration by the School District

- ❖ Horace Mann and Park Elementary Schools – President Mitchell mentioned that the abandoned railroad corridor provided an opportunity to create a linear park and link between the two schools as well as provide access to Otis-Prospect Park. He mentioned that the Park and Recreation Department would be required to provide landscaping and path maintenance.
- ❖ L'Ouverture Computer Technology Magnet – President Mitchell said since closing Wabash would create access problems to McAdams Park, he suggested that this item still needed further study including the possibility of sharing parking and access.

- ❖ Wildwood Park – President Mitchell repeated the board's desire to obtain this site permanently for park purposes.

Properties Considered by City Staff

- ❖ Washington Elementary School – Director Kupper mentioned the suggestion of acquiring land adjacent to Washington Elementary for installation of a hike/bike path.
- ❖ Funston Elementary School - President Mitchell said this site needed further study if it was to be considered for park and open space use.
- ❖ Northwest High School and Wilbur Middle School – President Mitchell mentioned the need for additional lighted soccer, baseball and other athletics fields in that area of the City.
- ❖ Greiffenstein School – President Mitchell said the board would like the Greiffenstein site donated to the City for park and recreation purposes because the southern part of the City was under served in terms of parks and open space.
- ❖ Seltzer or Minneha – Director Kupper mentioned that these sites would be closed and indicated that the City had multiple needs in this area including parks and playgrounds, in addition to a site for a Mini City Hall.
- ❖ Price School – Director Kupper stated that since the school was being closed, the Park Department could utilize this 6-½ acre tract of land for parks, playgrounds and open space.
- ❖ 45<sup>th</sup> St. North and Oliver – Director Kupper indicated that this was another under served area of the City for park and recreation facilities. It was suggested that perhaps this could be a multi-purpose facility/joint venture between the City and the School Board.
- ❖ Payne Elementary – Director Kupper indicated that Payne was another site where a joint venture between the City and School Board might be viable.
- ❖ Lincoln Elementary, Hamilton Middle School and Harry Street Elementary School – Director Kupper indicated that a joint use agreement might be possible to install tennis courts and ball fields at these sites.
- ❖ McCullom or Wilbur – Director Kupper indicated that the City had multiple needs at these two sites including parks and recreation, community Police, OCI, a Mini City Hall, and other uses.

On motion by Todd, second by Robinson, it was the general consensus of the board that they agreed in principle with the Study as presented and would recommend City Council approval of the proposed plan subject to further negotiations. Motion passed 6-0. Trix Niernberger abstained.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

- Copy of the Needs Assessment Study for Three New Parks in Wichita, Kansas from Rice – Foster Associates. President Mitchell referred board members to the study. He briefly expressed his concerns regarding the following:

He mentioned the need to develop an alternative route from Hydraulic to Garvey Park without using the residential neighborhood. Director Kupper said he would request a right-of-way through the new Greiffenstein school site as part of the North Linwood Park deal. President Mitchell mentioned \$20,000 in the Garvey Concept budget for a wildlife observation center that appeared to be located in the middle of the river. He also mentioned the \$100,000 allocated for a water play area. He commented that the hike and bike trails at Chapin were expressed in linear meters and questioned the figure of \$100 for 3.28 feet of a 4 foot wide path. Director Kupper clarified that he thought the paths would be 10 feet in width. President Mitchell also questioned \$300,000 for an interpretive center in the wetlands. As far as discussion of the Brooks proposal, Director Kupper indicated that Brooks would continue to be used as a landfill for the next 15 years minimum.

Johnston asked for clarification concerning the proposed dog parks. Director Kupper briefly explained the concept. Trix Niernberger questioned the elimination of any reference to skate parks. Director Kupper said that the Department of Transportation (DOT) did not agree with the idea of installing a skate park under Kellogg and St. Frances. He said staff was gathering information and continuing negotiations with DOT. He added that he has also been negotiating with the Fire Department to promote the idea of installing small parks adjacent to the new firehouses. He mentioned several positive aspects of the proposal including built-in/on site emergency medical technicians, bathrooms and fire personnel as mentors.

On motion by Niernberger, seconded by Todd, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to receive and file the report.

- Article from the *Wichita Eagle* dated 5/1/01 entitled “Big Ditch’s engineer to join hall of fame”

Responding to a question from June Bailey, Joe Todd briefly mentioned that he would ask Frank Smith to contact Director Kupper concerning the land adjacent to the Big Ditch south of Central.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:10 p.m.

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M.S. Mitchell, President

ATTEST:

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Maryann Crockett, Clerk  
Recording Secretary